THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) to (c) There is no conclusive scientific evidence on the harmful effects of Asbestos. Further, the units manufacturing Asbestos Sheets have to follow various safety norms prescribed by Bureau of Indian Standards to protect workers employed in these units against the harmful effects of Asbestos. Therefore, in the absence of any conclusive evidence to suggest that manufacture of Asbestos Sheets causes lung cancer amongst workers employed in these units, it is not desirable to ban production of these sheets.

Benefits to farmers from Agricultural Export Zones

†4990. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that farmers are being benefited substantially with the setting up of special Agricultural Export Zones;

(b) if so, whether Government are oonsidering to take any steps for making it more effective; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) One of the objectives of setting up Agri Export Zones (AEZ) is to benefit the farmer, a vital component of the entire supply chain from farm to the market. Specifically, AEZs contemplate farmer-oriented benefits such as training in pre-and-post harvest technologies, distribution of quality seeds, land development etc.

New Auto Policy

4991. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the new auto policy is claimed to be a roadmap for the automobile industry after the removal of quantitative restrictions; and

(b) if so, what are the details of this policy and its impact on the future growth of the industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The new auto policy has already been laid before the Parliament on 7th March, 2002. The

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.